



**Venture Academy Virtual Learning Handbook:
*A Guide to Online Learning for Students and Families***

VENTURE ACADEMY
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[Website: cdaschools.org/venture](http://cdaschools.org/venture)

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Introduction

Venture Academy is an accredited public school of Coeur d'Alene School District #271 serving students in grades 6-12. Our mission is to equip students to achieve their highest potential through individual, flexible and relevant educational experiences that enhance their academic growth and prepare them for lifelong learning and success. At Venture Academy, learning is personalized to meet the needs of each student. Options for student learning include in-person instruction, taking classes online remotely or a combination of online and in-person instruction.

Is Online Learning the Right Choice for Me or My Student?

The most important question to consider before choosing online learning is whether the student is suited to the demands of working from home with a flexible schedule. Attending classes remotely requires students to show personal responsibility and actively participate in their online classes. It is expected that students will complete assignments in each class for 4 days per week. The fifth day is a make up day to either work ahead, or get caught up if there is any missing work. Students who do not complete work in each class, each of the four days, will be marked absent.

The following characteristics are key to successful online learning:

- **Effective Communication:** Can the student ask for help, make contact with the instructor and/or other students online and through email?

- Independent Study Habits: Can the student study and complete assignments without direct supervision and follow a daily learning schedule without face to face interactions with a teacher?
- Self-Motivated: Does the student have the desire to learn and a willingness to acquire the skills and knowledge to complete assignments?
- Academic Readiness: Does the student have the basic reading, writing, math and computer literacy skills to succeed in an online environment?
- Technological Skills: Does the student know how to use a Chromebook, how to create/open/save documents and use various technologies such as Google Slides/Docs/Sheets, Gmail and Google Meets?

It is important to note that working online requires more, not less, student accountability for their time, performance and productivity.

Enrolling in Venture Academy

Students choosing Venture Academy will be required to commit to an entire 12 week term of learning. Students may only transition to in-person classes at the beginning of the new term. Applications are available on our website: <https://www.cdaschools.org/venture> There will be a 3 day add/drop period at the beginning at each trimester to make a final decision on in-person or online learning. After the third day, students may not transition into in-person learning.

Expectations for Online Learning

- Each student in grades 6-12 will be enrolled in four courses per trimester.
- Students earn the privilege of working completely online.
 - New students are expected to meet, in person, on the Venture Academy Campus, for a minimum of one morning or afternoon during the first week of the term to meet with their advisor and teachers and learn the expectations of the class.

- New students will continue to meet with their advisor in a virtual meeting a minimum of once per month, or as needed to maintain success.
 - If, at any point, a student is not making timely progress on one or more classes, they will be required to attend an in-person session with their advisor and/or other teachers until they are earning a 70% or better in every class. They may be required to attend a half or full day, depending on the amount of time needed to complete work.
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- Each student will complete career exploration activities through Xello as assigned.
 - All students are required to attend all scheduled meetings with teachers and advisors. **The camera must be turned on for any virtual meetings.**
 - All students are required to be on campus for state and district testing including, but not limited to ISATs, PSATs, and SATs.
 - All final tests must be proctored in-person on the Venture Academy campus.
 - Some online classes require students to complete projects or other assessments in-person. This includes the senior project, speeches, science labs, and Health class CPR training, etc.

Chromebook and Materials Handout

Online learners who do not have their own Chromebooks may pick up their district-provided Chromebook and other other materials required for each course at Venture Academy's front desk Tuesday - Friday from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm or by appointment. Please contact the family liaison at 208.667.7460 ext: 46009 with any questions or to arrange a pick up time.

Getting Started

Student classes will be scheduled through Schoology using Edmentum and other teacher prepared materials. When appropriate, students may be scheduled in IDLA classes, or in teacher-designed courses. Class schedules can be viewed through Skyward.

A Guide to Online Learning Tools

- Edmentum: Edmentum is an online learning platform that provides digital learning materials for students.
- IDLA: IDLA is an online supplemental high school that provides courses to students.
- Skyward: Skyward is a student information platform that helps schools manage student records, curriculum, attendance, grades, discipline, reporting and more. Guardians and students use Skyward to access information about grades, attendance and other information pertaining to students.
- Schoology: Schoology is a web-based learning management system (LMS) that allows teachers to create and assign both traditional and creative tasks. Students and Guardians use Schoology to access lessons/projects that teachers assign.

Progress Checks and Due Dates

Advisors will meet with students virtually using Google Meets or in-person to evaluate progress and determine next steps to ensure successful completion of their classes. In addition to meeting with advisors, students will meet with content teachers as necessary to receive feedback and assistance to complete assignments. At the beginning of each term, students will receive a syllabus informing them of projects and activities that will need to be completed on campus.

Progress reports will be emailed home midterm of each trimester. Parents may contact teachers and advisors by email or phone to ask questions or schedule meetings.

All courses must be completed by the end of the term to earn credit.

Grading

Grades are final by the end of the trimester in all classes and will be updated through Skyward.

Grading Scale:

A: 90 - 100%

B: 80 - 89%

C: 70 - 79%

Students are expected to redo any tests or assignments that are below 70%. All assignments and tests must be completed to earn credit for the class.

Student Expectations

- Complete all tutorials, assignments, quizzes and tests on time every week
- Check email at least 3 times on each school day Monday through Friday. Once in the morning by 9:00, again at noon, and at 2:30
- Seek help when you don't understand the material. Email your teacher and meet with them, either in-person or virtually, until you understand.
- Seek help if you are having technical difficulties. You may email your advisor, a teacher, or the family liaison.
- Show up online, daily Monday - Friday, on time and ready to learn.
- Be on campus, on time and ready to learn, as required
- Respond to emails promptly, within 2 hours Monday - Friday.

Expectations of Online Learning Advisors and Teachers

- Provide scheduled online and/or in-person meetings
- Make contact with each family during the first two weeks of school, either in person or by phone.
- Provide ongoing support in-person and online
- Provide in-person learning activities including labs, projects and activities as required for specific courses

- Provide feedback for any assignments or projects as necessary to ensure high levels of learning for all students
- Respond to student/guardian questions and concerns promptly (within 24 hours Mon - Friday. 8:00 am to 3:00 pm)

Frequently Asked Questions

What grades does Venture Academy serve?

Venture Academy serves students in grades 6-12. However, classes for students in grades 6-8 are offered online only.

Can my student still attend some classes at Coeur d'Alene High School or Lake City High School or one of the middle schools if they are enrolled in online classes through Venture Academy?

No. If students are enrolled in online classes through Venture Academy, they may also attend in-person classes through Venture Academy. They will not be able to attend classes at other schools.

If my student is homeschooled, can they still take some classes through Venture Academy online or do they have to attend full-time?

All students who attend Venture Academy online are required to attend full-time.

Can students participate in sports if they attend online classes? Yes.

Students enrolled at Venture Academy may participate in sports at their neighborhood school. Transportation is not provided.

If my student has an IEP or 504 plan, can they still enroll full-time in online classes?

Yes, students may enroll in online classes if they have an IEP or 504. The team will hold a meeting and make an amendment to ensure that services are appropriate for the online setting.

Is there a counselor for online classes?

Yes. Rachelle Smotherman is the counselor for Venture Academy. She is available to help answer questions about scheduling, graduation requirements and whether a student is on track for graduation. The counselor also acts as liaison between school staff, students and families. In addition, the counselor can refer families to community resources, as needed. The counselor does not provide in-depth mental health counseling, but rather works with all students in the school to make sure they are learning and growing in a healthy school environment.

Is accelerated learning possible? *Yes, students may take more rigorous courses to prepare them for college, and they may also take additional classes that would enable them to graduate early, dual-enroll, or attend KTEC.*

Are electives available? *Yes, electives are available; however, there are fewer offered than in a traditional brick and mortar school. Students will not have as many options, but we will work with them to ensure they have relevant and interesting classes. Electives are an opportunity to expand one's thinking and learn new things, so students should be open to taking classes they hadn't considered before, and doing their best.*

Will there be transportation provided for students during the required in person day? *Yes. Contact transportation (208) 667-3451 to sign up to ride the bus. If students ride the bus, they should plan on attending for the full day, or arrange to be picked up by a parent.*

Will there be meals provided for students during the required in-person day? *Yes, students may purchase breakfast or lunch and may apply for free or reduced meals.*

Will students have a graduation ceremony if they attend online school? *Yes, students are part of Venture Academy whether they work in-person or online and will be allowed to take part in the commencement ceremony after they complete the requirements for graduation.*